

A. CHRISTMAS CAROL.

A King way after DECEASED.

He was dead—dead as a herring. We must clearly establish this or else there is no wonder in the story I have to tell. Unless it were clearly proved that the black woman and her black child that haunt a certain foundry in the west end are dead, there would be no more wonder in seeing them wandering about than in meeting Mrs. MORN and her piecaninni in Centre street any night after twelve. If we had been making the simile ourselves, we would have preferred "as dead as a church monument," as the dearest thing we know of; but our fathers made the apothegm and ours shall not be the iconoclastic fingers to tear down the herring!

He was a cheery old fellow, with a long white beard, and a great wreath of pine twigs twined into a crown on his hoary head. He tramped along whistling merrily, as all good-hearted old gentlemen ought, shaking the snow from his moccasined feet. He approached a high pile of buildings and rapped a double coachman's knock on the outer gate. He looked up at the evening sun while waiting, and the sun looked down at him, red and knowing, winking and blinking like a jolly old toper out of a third storey window. He knew what that old fellow wanted, and you could see he was growing red in the face with suppressed merriment.

The door opened with a faint creak, as if feebly complaining at having so much work to do lately, and a great, big red-headed Scotchman appeared: "Wha noo?"

"Mercy on us!" said old Christmas, for any one could have recognised him at a glance. "Mercy on us, if ever I heard such words in this house before. My good man, is Sir John in?"

"No, mon, he's dead."

"Dead," said Christmas, shaking the ice-drops from his head, till the porter shivered, and expected to see the old gentleman melt into a stream of water. "Dead, and who lives here now?"

"Meester Mackenzie!"

"Then take up my card. Well, well," mused Christmas, as he followed the porter; every year brings a change. The king is dead. Long live the king! I must be civil to the new proprietor."

A little after the old man left, whistling thoughtfully, *A man's a man for a' that*. "He's a good child; canny, as he says himself and I have no doubt he will keep his house in better order than that sad dog Sir John; but the man might have offered me a glass of wine."

It is a curious fact that when I turned down the street leading to my house that night, when I came to the door and trotted at the knocker, it suddenly appeared unfamiliar. I have trotted at that knocker for five years, and never before saw how closely it resembled Sir John. But there it was, the very likeness. I opened the door, half expecting to see his long legs dangling at the other side. I was disappointed.

I went up stairs, entered my own room, locked the door, and sat down. I had barely mixed my first tumbler when I became conscious that some one was in the room. It was a spectral Sir John. In the light from the fire I could see it was a ghost, for looking through him the two buttons were clearly visible on the back of his coat. He spoke in a hollow voice: "I am cold. I, wrapped up for many years in the trappings of office, have to wander in the night air with only this light suit. But my chief punishment is that I am doomed, night after night, to see my successor wearing my furred robes. Oh Corruption, Corruption!"

The wall was taken up by innumerable voices, "Corruption, corruption!"

"Look there," said Sir John, and looking out of the window, I saw the place was filled with spectres. There was one burly spectre with plaid pants, who wore a fool's cap, with "Pacific Charter—Sold," printed on it in large letters, and he was chained to steamers and railway cars, and could only wring his hands and cry out. Another flitted by, a stout spectre, on a skinny, spavined nag, with "West Toronto," on his belt, and he threw up his arms

as he passed and wept out "Defeated." The more I looked the thicker came the crowd, and they all shouted, "Corruption, corruption, corruption!"

Then Sir John went to the window and cried out "I am not dead, not dead, dead!" and his voice died down into his boots, and he vanished into the night air.

The room blazed with light, soft, lambent light, and there in the centre of it, seated on great chins of beef and pillars of turkeys and geese, and plum puddings, all covered with fresh pine boughs, twinkling with icicles, was old Christmas.

He laughed jovially and said, "Tell the row Premier what you have seen. Tell him he has power, let him see to it that he does not abuse it; he has patronage, let him give it to the deserving; that it is better to reward a friend than to buy an enemy; that Reformers are as liable to slip as Tories, and that only by care can he avoid being added to the chorus of spectres who wait on the night air and wander over the cold benches of opposition."

The light suddenly died out. A chill crept over me. There was a sudden noise, a great rushing and shouting and hurrahing for Merry Christmas.

Yes, I was alone, alone in my study. The fire had gone out while I was sleeping, and all this noise was the shouting of my children, and softly as an angel's voice I heard my wife saying—"Christmas, God bless it."

Ay, ay, friends, one and all, join me in the toast with right good will, "Christmas—God bless it."

QUEER NOTE.

(Affixed to a parcel containing a pair of new Shoes, found on a public Street.)

EDITOR MAIL.—Sir: Here's yer "Specimen," according to request, and now do get me up a first-class loud and powerful Christmas notice, the same as you promised SMITH the grocer, and SIMPSON the tailor. Say mine is the best shop in town, &c., &c.

Yonge Street.

Yours truly,

JEMMY WAXEND.

GRIP'S POLITICAL PARODIES.

MACKENZIE'S VERSION OF THE "NOTES AMBROSIAN."

Tune—"THE YOUNG LOCHMAR."

Oh! the gallant Sir John is a knight of renown,
Though from his high place he has lately come down.
He didn't get very well out of that scrape
Of the charter, for BLAKE put the thing in bad shape;
The people back parliament saying, begone!
The stains are too recent upon you Sir John.

To be sure there are some, who, in their simple way,
Still attempt to uphold that he never took pay
Which, were it believed, still is awkward to tell,
When the Knight has explained his position so well;
Dirty TOPPER may howl, and JAMES BEATY brag on,
But he's fouled his own nest by explaining, has John.

Though half of the people his purchase might see,
Or think that they saw it—'tis nothing to me;
They were only spectators! and can you suppose
Them as able to judge of a bargain as those
Who bought or who purchased. I reason upon
His own version—as told by the gallant Sir John.

Though MACDONALD might barter his vote to be judge,
And though the pure patriot T' LEXY cry "*fulge*"
Though a fellow like DODGE his conviction declare,
With Matthew and Hillyard, that all was quite square,
Yet when we recall, the Commission that's gone,
We perceive he has cooked his own goose, has Sir John.